

ED. BOLDEN'S PHILADELPHIA STARS BASEBALL CLUB - MEMBERS NEGRO
NATIONAL LEAGUE

Publicity Story

Ed. Bolden's Philadelphia Stars, whose performances last season rank them with the most sensational teams in the history of Negro baseball, are considered one of the leading contenders for the 1945 Negro National League championship.

After finishing as strong contenders the two seasons prior to last year, the Stars came into their own throughout the 1944 drive, and exhibited a brand of baseball that has made them the talk of Negro baseball circles throughout the Country.

Despite brilliant achievements on the part of every player, the Stars were nosed out by the Homestead Grays on the final day of the regular schedule, finishing as the closest kind of a runner-up, only a half game away from the championship.

However, with the same array of top-notchers back, plus ~~at~~ the addition of several outstanding men, owner Ed. Bolden, veteran of 36 years in Negro baseball, manager Homer Curry, starting his fourth consecutive season as headman and the entire Stars personnel are looking forward with extreme confidence to another successful campaign, this time climaxed with the World's Negro championship.

In striving to get off to a fast start, the Stars will be out to further the many enviable marks established last year. With tremendous hitting power, exceptional and dependable fielding and well-balanced hurling the keynote of last season's attack, the Stars will have their work out out for them as they attempt to swing right into the stride of last year.

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Following are the many marks achieved by the Stars as a team and the individual players at the conclusion of the 1944 campaign.

1. The team as a unit captured the hitting championship with a .303 averaged, and finished only a single percentage point below the Homestead Grays for ~~the~~ fielding honors.
2. Frank Austin, brilliant Panamanian shortstop, won the batting title, with a mark of .390.
3. Five of Bolden's regulars batted .300 or better.
4. Bill Ricks, outstanding rookie hurler, won the strikeout crown, with a total of 74 victims, while also carrying off the best league victory mark, 10 decisions.

Austin, an aggressive fielding marvel, who sparked the entire club since joining them, set the heavy hitting pace with his .390 average, while the other sluggers in the coveted .300 class are: Jim West, flashy first sacker, .350; Marvin Williams, Austin's double-play mat, and one of the greatest second sackers in Negro annals, .338; Gene Benson, center fielder, .327 and Ed. Stone, left fielder, .300.

All these men are again at their respective posts, along with the other mainstays, who just fell short of the .300 mark, which would have set an all-time record.

Manager Curry, ^{the} ~~the~~ rightfielder/^{who} batted .289, will form the outfield trio with Benson and Stone, while the other posts will be handled by Tom Woods, a North Carolina product, third base, and the receiving department made up of Willie Johnson, highly rated newcomer, also from North Carolina and veteran Clarence Palm.

Ricks, a 6 feet 2 inch, 194 pound ace from Lexington, N.C., is expected to continue his sterling pitching performances, as the key man of the mound corps.